

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 1479

EXDIS

E O 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)
SUBJ: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: INVITATIONS - TOWN MEETING AND AIRLIFT
MEMORIAL CEREMONY

REF: STATE 156688

1. ON JUNE 21 WE CONVEYED TO SENAT PROTOCOL (DIEDRICH)
THE RELEVANT DECISIONS AND COMMENTS CONTAINED IN DEPARTMENT'S
REFTEL. THE FOLLOWING EMERGED FROM OUR DISCUSSION CONCERN-
ING THE TOWN MEETING AND AIRLIFT MEMORIAL CEREMONY.

2. THE SENAT IS PROCEEDING UPON THE FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS
CONCERNING THE GERMANS WHO WILL BE INVITED TO THE AIRLIFT
MEMORIAL CEREMONY AND TO THE TOWN MEETING.

(A) THERE WILL BE APPROXIMATELY SIX-TO-SEVEN THOUSAND
(6-7,000) PERSONS INVITED TO THE TWO EVENTS, WITH ATTENDANCE
(CALCULATED AFTER ANTICIPATED NO-RESPONSES, IT BEING VACATION
TIME) DIVIDED AT ROUGHLY 700 GUESTS FOR THE TOWN MEETING
AND 5,000 AT THE MEMORIAL.

(B) THE INVITEES TO THE TOWN MEETING WILL INCLUDE
ABOUT 500-600 BERLIN PARTICIPANTS (INCLUDING SPOUSES) IN THE
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RECENT BERLIN/MILWAUKEE FRIENDSHIP FORCE EXCHANGES.
OF THESE, PERHAPS 350-400 WOULD BE ABLE TO COME TO THE TOWN

MEETING. THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS, I.E., UP TO THE 700 LIMIT, WILL
BE DETERMINED BY THE TWELVE BOROUGHES, BY CHOICE OF PERSONS
FROM NUMEROUS PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS (HOSPITALS,
FACTORIES, BUSINESSES, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, ETC.).

(C) ALL ATTENDEES WOULD BE SUBJECT TO NAME CHECKS, AS THE BEST WAY TO ELIMINATE SECURITY RISKS.

(D) THE TOWN MEETING ATTENDANCE WILL BE DIVIDED BETWEEN 700 CITIZENS PARTICIPANTS AND UP TO 500 PRESS REPRESENTATIVES. THE LATTER WOULD SIT IN THE BACK, AND WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE.

(E) AT THE AIRLIFT MEMORIAL THE SENAT VISUALIZES THESE APPROXIMATELY 5,000 INVITED GUESTS WOULD CONSTITUTE AN "INNER RING" COVERING THE SMALL MEMORIAL PARK. OUTSIDE, ALONG THE SURROUNDING STREETS, THE PUBLIC WOULD BE FREE TO ATTEND. (COMMENT: THE PUBLIC ATTENDANCE IS EXPECTED TO BE FAIRLY LIMITED HERE, AS TEMPELHOF IS ISOLATED FROM THE CENTER OF TOWN WHERE THE CROWDS WILL BE ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON. END COMMENT.)

3. IN RESPONSE WE TOLD PROTOCOL THAT THE MODE OF INVITATIONS APPEARED REASONABLE, BUT WE HAD A COUPLE OF RESERVATIONS, I.E.:

(A) IT WAS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER 500 JOURNALISTS SHOULD BE ADMITTED TO THE TOWN MEETING, OUT OF A TOTAL ATTENDANCE OF 1200 (CAPACITY IS 1260). SO MANY JOURNALISTS WOULD ALTER THE SPECIFIC GRAVITY OF THE AUDIENCE, AND THERE WAS NO GUARANTEE THEY WOULD NOT "PARTICIPATE," E.G., BY APPLAUSE, LAUGHS OR GROANS. WE THOUGHT A MUCH SMALLER NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED. POSSIBLY A SMALL POOL WOULD SUFFICE, WITH THE REMAINING JOURNALISTS

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WATCHING ON CLOSED-CIRCUIT TV IN ADJOINING ROOMS. (COMMENT: WE RECOMMEND A POOL, BUT WE CONCEDE THAT UP TO THREE HUNDRED JOURNALISTS MIGHT BE TOLERABLE IN THE BACK AREA. A LARGER NUMBER WOULD MAKE THE PRESS-TO-PUBLIC RATIO TOO LARGE. WE ARE CONSCIOUS OF THE CONSIDERATION OF NOT ALIENATING THE PRESS BUT FEEL THAT SOME LIMITING OF SELECTION PRINCIPLE MUST BE APPLIED TO MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY OF THE TOWN MEETING. END COMMENT).

(B) IF WE WERE TO INCLUDE SOME AMERICANS IN THE AUDIENCE AT THE AIRLIFT MEMORIAL, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF GERMANS INVITED. PERHAPS A THOUSAND AMERICANS WOULD BE INVOLVED. (COMMENT: WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE GREATER PART OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY WHO WISH TO DO SO TO WITNESS THE ARRIVAL CEREMONY WITHIN TEMPELHOF BASE, TO WHICH THEY CAN HAVE READY ACCESS, RATHER THAN TO DISPLACE THE PUBLIC IN THE LIMITED SPACE AT THE AIRLIFT MEMORIAL. END COMMENT.)

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4. IN LIGHT OF THESE PROBLEMS WE SAID IT WOULD BE BETTER
IF THE SENAT DID NOT BEGIN ISSUING INVITATIONS UNTIL WE
HAD RECEIVED REACTIONS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE AS TO THE TOWN
MEETING PROPOSALS.

5. THE CHIEF OF PROTOCOL REPLIED THAT IT WAS URGENT TO
SETTLE THE INVITATION ISSUE PROMPTLY. THE INVITATIONS
WOULD HAVE TO BE ISSUED BY JUNE 30 AT THE LATEST FOR THE
FOLLOWING REASONS:

(A) MANY PEOPLE WOULD DECLINE, AND THE MAIL
NOTICE THEREOF WOULD TAKE A WEEK. THE SENAT WOULD THEN
HAVE TO SEND DOUBLE INVITATIONS TO OTHERS TO TAKE THE
PLACES OF THE DROPOUTS; OTHERWISE THERE WOULD BE GAPS
WHICH COULD RUN TO AS HIGH AS TWENTY PERCENT OF THE ORIGINAL
LIST.

(B) ALL THE NAMES WOULD HAVE TO BE SECURITY CHECKED, AND
THIS WOULD TAKE SOME TIME.

6. COMMENT: THE SENAT DOES NOT RPT NOT PLAN TO INVITE
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CONSULAR CORPS TO THE TOWN MEETING.
THE QUESTION OF SOVIET/EAST EUROPEAN ACCEPTANCE OF SUCH
AN INVITATION OR WHETHER THEY SHOULD BE INVITED AT ALL
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AFTER THEIR BOYCOTT OF THE QUEEN'S PARADE DOES NOT THEREFORE
ARISE IN THIS CONTEXT. THEY WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE
GENERAL PUBLIC INVITATIONS FOR THE AIRLIFT CEREMONY.
END COMMENT.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: WE NEED URGENTLY VIEWS ABOUT
WHETHER THE SENAT'S PROPOSED INVITATION METHODS AND
CONCEPTS ARE ACCEPTABLE AND HOW MANY PRESS SHOULD BE
PERMITTED TO ATTEND THE TOWN MEETING.GEORGE

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